

Somaliland Is Here To Stay

(Press Conference)

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Thank you all for giving me your precious time on a Saturday when you could have been enjoying your week-end.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Ethiopia for its usual warm and gracious welcome to our President, H.E. Musa Bihi Abdi and to his Delegation each time we visit your great country Ethiopia.

We also wish to express our appreciation for the invitation, warm welcome, and hospitality extended to our President and to his Delegation by H.E. Alpha Conde, President of Guinea during the four days that we spent in that great country.

The true History and location of Somaliland

The Republic of Somaliland is the former British Somaliland Protectorate, which gained its Independence from Britain on the 26th June, 1960.

At Somaliland's Independence, neighbouring Somalia was still an Italian Colony and so were 42 other African States.

Location of Somaliland

- To the West, it has a border with the former French Territory of the Affar and Issas which is the current Republic of Djibouti.
- To the South, it has a border with Ethiopia
- To the East, it has a border with the former Italian Colony of Somalia
- Somaliland is strategically located at the mouth of the Red Sea in the Gulf of Aden
- The territory of Somaliland is 176,120 square Kilometers and therefore is bigger than 18 countries in Africa. It has a coastline that is 850 km long and a population of 4 million.

Union with Somalia

When Somalia also became independent five days **after** Somaliland, a union was made on the 1st of July, 1960, between the two sovereign and independent Somali nations. Just like Senegal and Gambia did.

This fact is overlooked by the International community who, for reasons that we fail to understand, grants our former and **junior** partner **Somalia** a de-facto position of **ownership** over Somaliland.

Failed Union

When the union did not meet the aspirations of our people, Somaliland tried to withdraw from the failed union. Sadly this resulted in a brutal civil war that lasted 9 years from 1982 to 1991, when 95% of our cities became destroyed, 250,000 of our people were massacred with their bodies filled into mass graves. New mass graves are still being discovered to this day.

During that war, half a million became internally displaced and an additional million sought shelter in camps in other countries .

Somaliland separated from Somalia

After we defeated the troops of Siyad Barre of Somalia, we formally separated from Somalia on 18th May, 1991, and closed our border where the British had left it upon our independence.

Rebuilding of Somaliland

Once we separated from Somalia in 1991, we started to rebuild our country without external help and have brought our people back from the refugee camps and from as far as from Europe and North America.

We then embarked on an energetic nation building on self-help basis and with no assistance from the international community:

- Demobilized our militia
- Developed our Constitution

- Elected a Parliament and an Upper House
- Formed Political Parties
- Held a Referendum in 2001
- Held five peaceful and democratic Presidential Elections attended by International Observers.

For example, President Muse Bihi Abdi was elected with 55% of the votes and received 305,909 votes when President Formaggio of Somalia bought 184 votes from the Parliament of Somalia.
Who then is the true President ?!

-Somaliland has no Pirates, we have never taken hostages and have had only one act of terrorism in 2008 when Somalia experiences several attacks a week.

- When Somalia has African Union Amisom troops to try to keep peace in Somalia, we have maintained Peace and Stability in Somaliland for the past 28 years without International troops to make it happen

This tangible progress and stability has earned Somliland the description of '**A Rare African Miracle**'

Respect for the territorial integrity of nations.

Somaliland stand neither for secession nor for the revision of Africa's borders. We reaffirm our commitment to the peace and stability of the region which includes an unreserved respect for the unity, and the territorial integrity of nations.

Somaliland was among the first African States to be free from colonial rule, and our demand for recognition implies full respect of the borders of British Somaliland Protectorate as handed over to us at the moment of our independence from Great Britain, well before Italian Somalia was independent.

International Trade and Political Collaboration

Somaliland maintains trade and peaceful relations with all nations, particularly with our African brothers.

Somaliland has visited and has been warmly received by more than half the nations of the world with repeated visits to many of them. We therefore find it very disrespectful and embarrassing to hear that Somalia has severed diplomatic relations with the free and great Sovereign country of Guinea for having hosted our President.

Does Somalia plan to sever relations with the other 90 countries in the world who have also hosted our government and delegations over the years ? Or was this a singular and direct attack and disrespect to H.E. Alpha Conde, President of Guinea ?

Having perfected the art of terrorism as the World's Worst Failed State, is Somalia now trying to introduce a new kind of terrorism to Africa, one which can be described as Diplomatic and Political Terrorism ?

The Sovereignty of Somaliland

Recognizing the sovereignty of Somaliland following our separation from Somalia 28 years ago is a reality with no turning back of the clock.

What remains today is for African wisdom and justice to prevail and for the international community to come to terms with the reality that former British Somaliland is intact and that former Italian Somalia has disintegrated and become so fragmented that the so-called Federal government there controls little more than a few streets in Mogadisho which are controlled for them by African troops.

It is time that the many remarkable achievements of Somaliland as well as the Peace and Stability it brings to the Horn of Africa is recognized by the ***world community of nations.***